
Humanitarian Assistance Highlights

Humanitarian assistance is in the national interest of the United States and is considered an investment in the future.

The Agency estimates that this year alone it has spent more than \$756.2 million on relief for 65 declared emergencies. Some \$477 million covered PL 480 Title II emergency food aid for nearly 21 million people. Of the 65 declared emergencies in 51 countries, 17 were complex, or man-made, and 48 were natural.

Prevention: Reducing Potential Impact Of Crises

■ The Agency monitored the potential for a 1995–96 drought in southern Africa and estimated food requirements to plan for effective and timely response.

■ The Greater Horn of Africa Initiative (GHAI) held a pivotal conference in 1996. USAID and the State Department joined forces with 10 Missions to incorporate into their strategic plans efforts to prevent future crises, link relief and development, and include long-term food security in sustainable development programs. The underlying emphasis is to ensure African ownership of GHAI strategies, policies, and activities and to use regional approaches to solve problems in the Greater Horn.

Relief: Meeting Urgent Needs

USAID responded to 48 natural disasters: 22 floods, 2 droughts, 2 epidemics, 2 tornados, 6 typhoons and cyclones, 6 earthquakes, 1 fire, and 1 volcanic mud slide.

■ The Agency implemented relief efforts in Bosnia–Herzegovina, Burundi, the Caucasus, Liberia, Rwanda, and other countries facing man-made disasters.

■ 4.2 million refugees, 7.5 million internally displaced people, and 9.2 million others affected by emergencies received emergency food assistance

■ Owing to greater stability in Mozambique, 21 million people returned to their homes from October 1992 through 1995 and reestablished farms and businesses. That cut dependence on free-food aid dramatically.

Transition: Establishing Security and Getting Basic Institutions Functioning

■ USAID helps countries make the transition from war to peace by working to restore security, demobilize the military, defuse land mines, and establish local governance.

■ In Haiti a major USAID initiative is under way to demobilize and train the army in vocational skills, promote community initiative, and restore social services such as water and sanitation throughout the country. Similar initiatives in Angola, Bosnia, and El Salvador enable people to return to normal life.

Development Linkages

■ USAID helps countries repair infrastructure, build local institutions, and provide technical and financial assistance to citizens.

■ To strengthen the link between emergency assistance and development, USAID programs increasingly include prevention, relief, and transition objectives in their long-term development planning.

Providing Humanitarian Assistance

In 1995 at least 41 million people depended on international humanitarian assistance. This is twice the number reported in 1983. Over the past decade, the number of people killed, injured, or otherwise affected by human or natural disasters has increased alarmingly. The level of destruction wrought is multiplying with each decade, particularly in developing countries. On the basis of this experience, the International Federation of the Red Cross estimates that by the year 2000, the number of people affected by disasters will reach 300–500 million.

Worldwide spending on humanitarian assistance rose to \$7.2 billion in 1994, compared with \$2.7 billion in 1985.

The thrust of humanitarian assistance has shifted in recent years, reflecting the explosion of man-made, or “complex” disasters, which now surpass the cumulative destructive force of drought, earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanoes, and other natural disasters.

In **Angola, Bosnia–Herzegovina, Burundi, El Salvador, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone**, and other sites of complex disaster, the demands on international humanitarian assistance have far outstripped those stemming from traditional natural disasters. The violence unleashed by complex disasters has the potential to create and maintain a long-term cycle of destruction, provoking protracted civil strife and massive disruption of populations.

Complex emergencies accounted for 41 percent of all international disasters to which the United States and the rest of the international donor community responded in 1996.

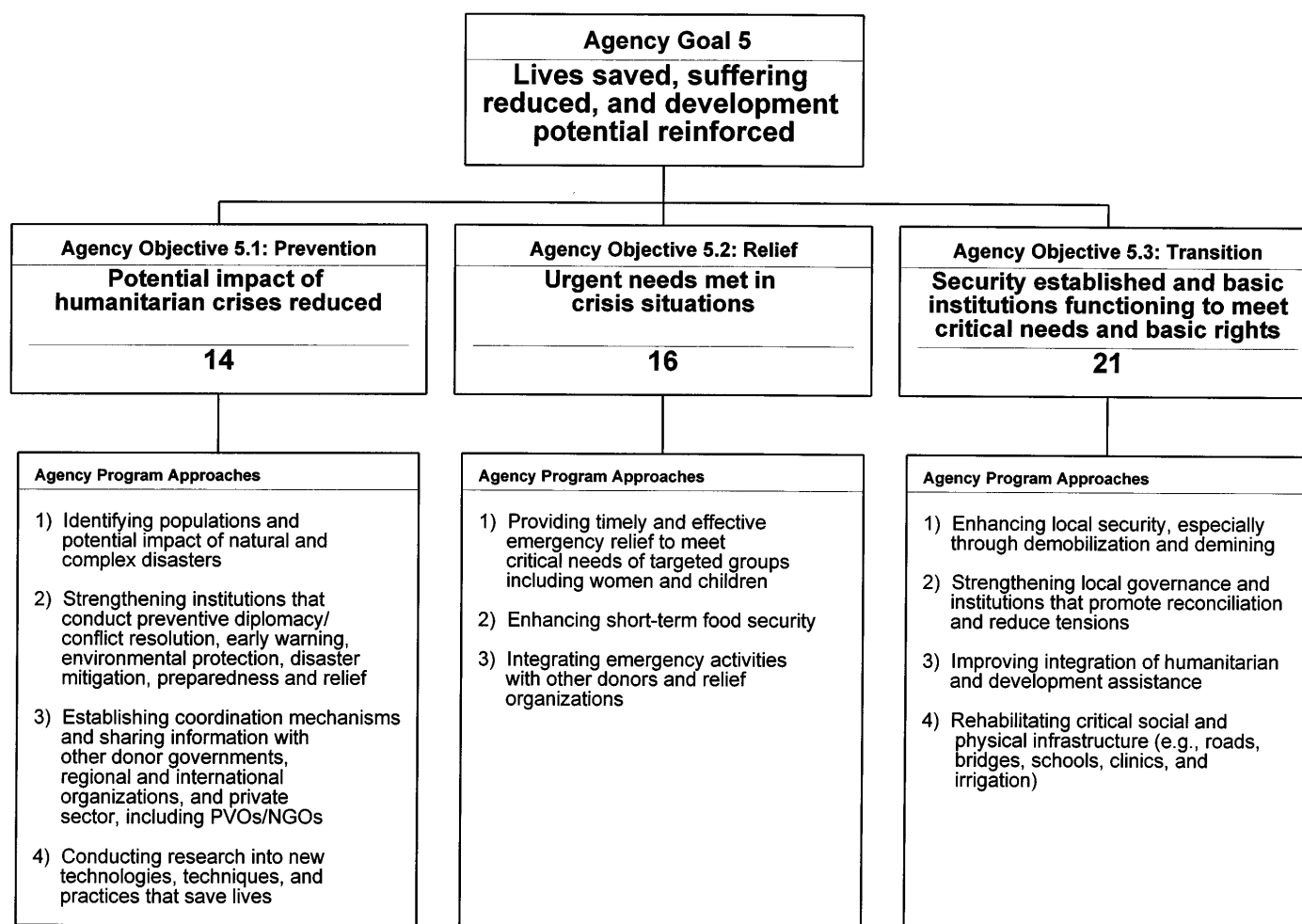
USAID humanitarian assistance looks beyond short-term emergency relief to supporting the transition to long-term sustainable development.

Coordination with host governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other donors is essential to this effort. Examples of successful international coordination include **Bosnia–Herzegovina**, the **Caucasus** and **Croatia**, **Haiti, Liberia**, and **Rwanda**.

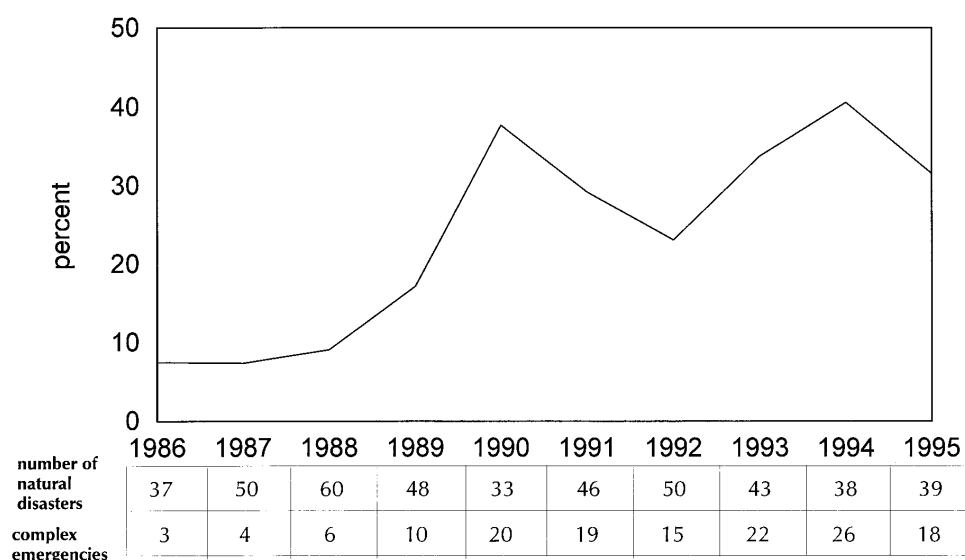
■ “Lives saved, suffering reduced, and development potential reinforced” is the USAID goal for humanitarian assistance. Three strategic objectives underpin it (see figure 5.1): 1) crisis prevention, 2) emergency relief, and 3) transition to sustainable development.

A crisis occurs when local authorities or communities are unable to cope with a disaster. Crisis prevention includes strengthening institutions that engage in conflict resolution. It also involves early-warning systems, environmental protection, and disaster mitigation, preparedness, and relief. When emergency assistance for relief is necessary, USAID aims to provide timely, targeted aid to meet the needs of identified groups, returning them to stability and short-term food security. Transitional efforts that move people from relief to a stable life include strengthening local governance and support institutions that promote reconciliation. Rehabilitating social and physical infrastructure is also a part of transitional efforts. Building long-term capacity for achieving food security and integration of humanitarian and development assistance is critical. Linking relief to development is basic to all programming.

Figure 5.1. Humanitarian Assistance Strategic Framework 1996



**Figure 5.2. Complex Disasters as a Percentage
Of Total US Government Declared Complex Disasters 1986–95**



Source: OFDA Annual Report FY 1995.

The Humanitarian Assistance Picture

Humanitarian assistance is in the national interest of the United States and is considered an investment for the future. In recent years, concern over complex emergencies has prompted U.S. intervention. Such emergencies commonly involve conflict and often include disruption of food and market systems. From 1989 through 1994, the number of complex emergencies to which the U.S. government responded soared from 17 percent to 41 percent of all officially declared emergencies. In 1995–96, 90 percent of USAID’s emergency assistance money went to

complex emergencies (see map 5.1 on page 5-6 for USAID programs with strategies contributing to humanitarian assistance). This trend continued through 1996, even though there were more natural disasters than man-made ones. In 1996 to date, USAID has spent more than \$756 million on relief in 51 countries, responding to 65 disasters. Of those, 17 were complex and 48 were natural (see figures 5.2 and 5.3).

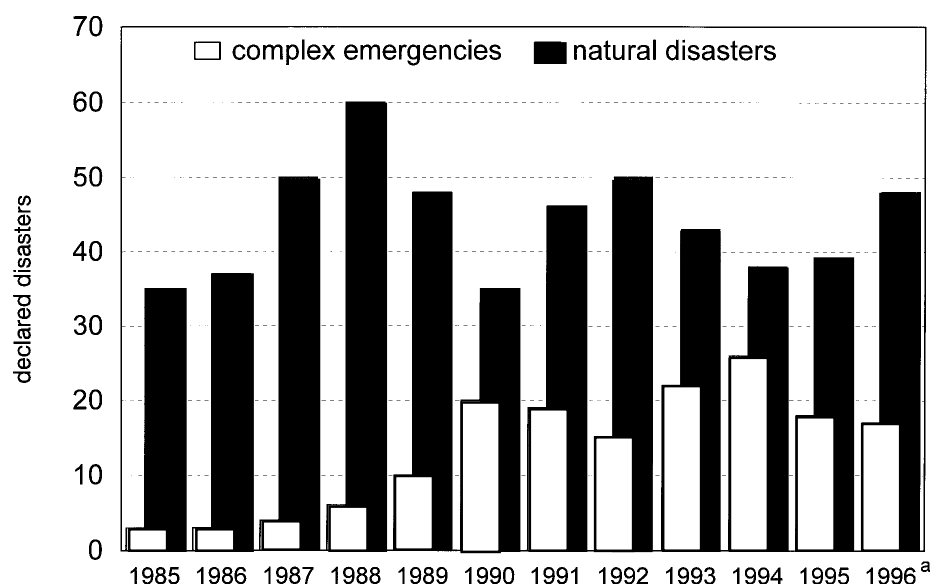
Worldwide spending on humanitarian assistance rose from \$2.7 billion in 1985 to \$7.2 billion by 1994 (the most recent worldwide figures available). In 1994 the United States and the European Union supplied 86 percent of food aid

money to 50 countries. The United States is also a member of the Organization of Economic Cooperation for Development. It provided 40 percent of worldwide funding for humanitarian assistance in 1994.

Measuring Performance

Efforts are under way to identify core indicators for tracking the Agency’s humanitarian assistance. Two workshops involving USAID/ Washington, USAID field Missions, private voluntary organizations, academia, and international organizations identified common indicators to

Figure 5.3. Number of OFDA-Declared Disasters



^a Includes information through September 12, 1996.
Source: Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, 1996.

measure performance of humanitarian assistance and food security. The challenges ahead include defining quantifiable indicators, collecting baseline data for certain countries, and documenting project activities. Owing to the difficulty in quantifying the benefits of this type of aid, much of the performance measurement data will continue to be qualitative and descriptive.

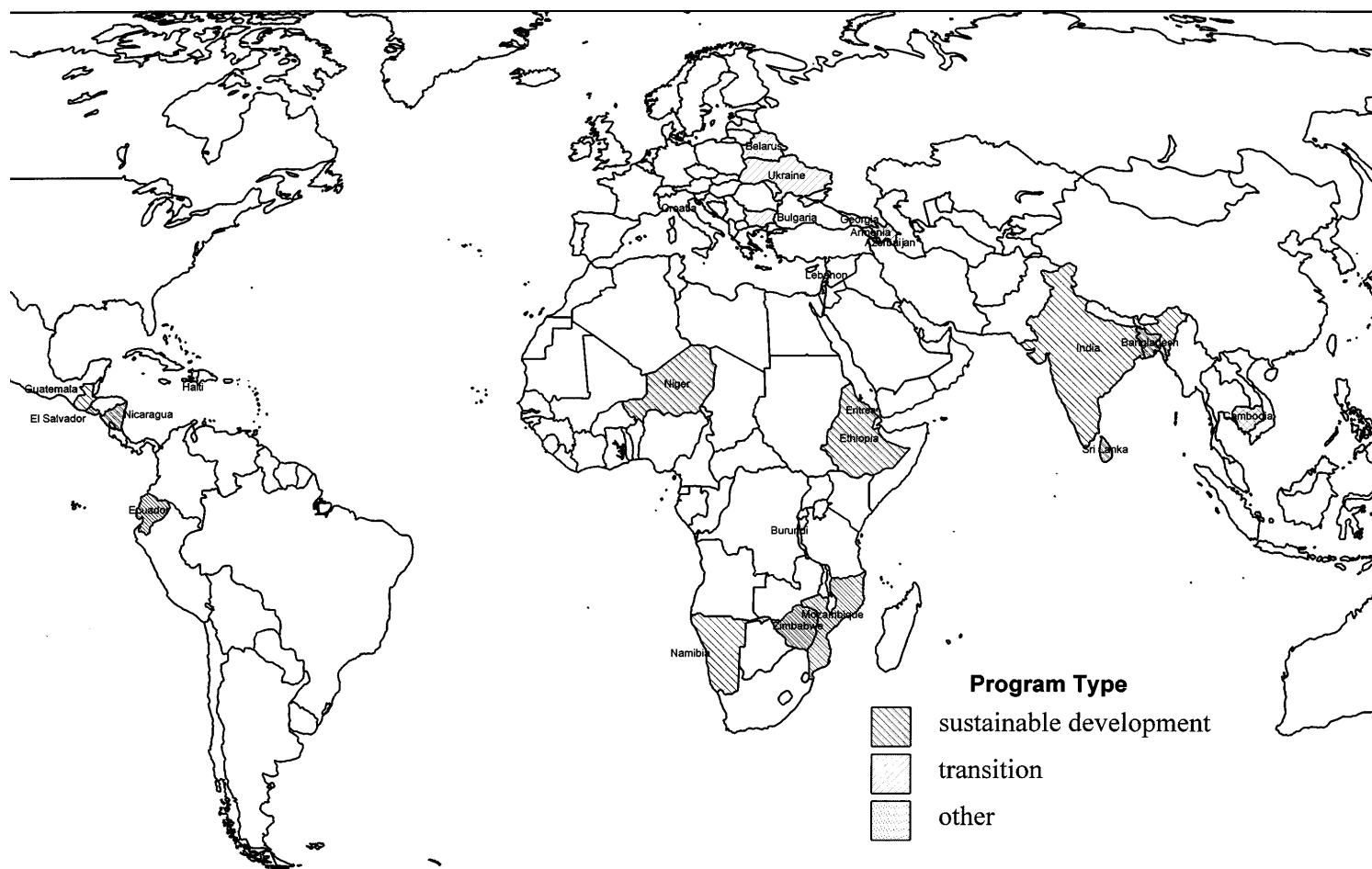
Prevention: Reducing Potential Impact Of Humanitarian Crises

While it is not always possible to prevent disasters, their effects can be reduced. Historically, USAID has emphasized mitigating the effects of natural disasters. Complex emergencies, however, demand a different response, and USAID is increasingly involved in responding to them. The Agency, therefore, is developing a more strategic approach to help identify and address the causes of these

crises as well as to establish better disaster preparedness plans.

To lessen the effects of humanitarian crises, USAID takes several prevention approaches—identifying the potential effect of the crises and the populations at risk, working with groups that mediate between potential combatants, and aiding in conflict resolution. Other approaches include early-warning systems, environmental protection, and disaster mitigation, preparedness, and relief.

Map 5.1. Programs with Strategies Contributing to Humanitarian Assistance



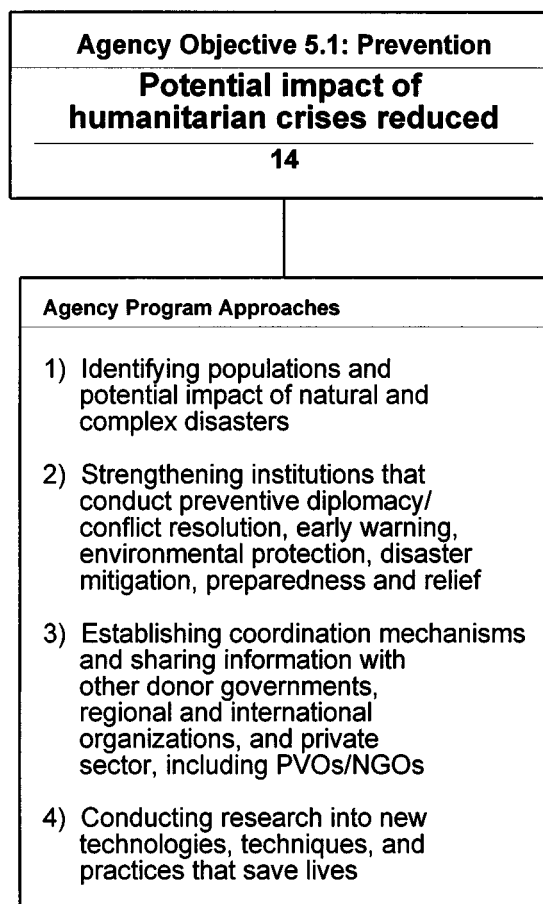
Establishing coordination mechanisms and sharing information with other donor governments, regional and international organizations, the private sector, and private voluntary organizations and nongovernmental organizations are also part of disaster prevention. Finally, prevention involves conducting research on new lifesaving technologies, techniques, and practices.

To avert a recurrence of crises, USAID uses these approaches in countries undergoing the transition from a state of emergency to one where sustainable development can take root. For example, in **Angola, Haiti, and Mozambique**, USAID is helping develop stable government institutions and establish national security. Early intervention, in the form of dialog between well-established development partners, can avert an impending conflict or lay the groundwork for planning a response to conflict.

In Africa, USAID regularly addresses natural crises such as drought and famine. Some examples follow.

USAID is using integrated pest management, which involves biological control of insects, to minimize the impact of locust and grasshopper infestations in the Sahel. During the last year, the project conducted five training-of-trainers sessions in emergency pest management. More than 300 lead farmers and crop protection and field agents were trained.

Figure 5.4. Agency Program Approaches Contributing to Agency Objective 5.1



The trainers and their trainees put into practice what they learned and lessened the effect of the 1995 locust outbreak in **Botswana, Eritrea, and Ethiopia**.

In **Ethiopia** the aim is to improve food security through timely food aid, environmental protection, increased agricultural production, and better delivery of health and nutrition services. Grain and pulse

(leguminous plant) production increased from 7.9 million megatons in 1994 to 9.1 million megatons in 1995, an increase of 15 percent. Good harvest years without drought cut the number of Ethiopians requiring emergency food aid a dramatic 47 percent, from 4.0 million in 1994 to 2.1 million in 1996.

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In **Somalia** field visits to investigate crop failure and food insecurity in the Juba Valley provided valuable information for the final phase of development of the Multidonor Action Plan for the area. The plan's successful execution stemmed the flow of people from the Juba Valley. However, more than a million people in Somalia still depend on donated food aid.

USAID is devising crisis prevention mechanisms to curb political instability in **the Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone**. Such instability has obstructed development in the region. The Agency's top priority remains regional emphasis on famine prevention. For example, its technical experts provided critical support to improve the management and effectiveness of West African research networks that develop and transfer crop technology for maize, rice, and sorghum.

The Sahel Regional Program established early-warning systems for droughts, famine, and pest infestations; created food crisis networks; and set up disaster monitoring and mitigation systems that identify vulnerable populations and help put into place mechanisms to minimize the potential impact of natural and complex disasters.

USAID involvement in **Zimbabwe** centers on increasing production of millet and sorghum rather than maize in drought-prone areas. A recent survey showed that in 1995, sorghum and millet constituted 15 percent and 33 percent, respectively, of total grain produced, compared with 3 percent and 9 percent, respectively, in 1993. In the same period, maize production dropped 45 percent. This is positive because sorghum and millet, unlike maize, are drought-resistant crops that afford security against a poor season.

In Asia an example of successful early-warning surveillance occurs in **Bangladesh**. Through a USAID-supported private voluntary organization (PVO), a timely early-warning surveillance system provides monthly information to decision-makers on the status of crop production and yields. It also routinely monitors nutritional status of children under 5. This has enabled timely responses to food needs.

The Agency has also invested in preparedness activities for floods and cyclones, increasing indigenous capacity to deal with natural disasters. In 1995, as a result of USAID-supported preparedness activities, relief supplies were provided within 72 hours to 25 percent of the population, in comparison to the expected coverage of 20 percent.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Agency is addressing the dangers posed by natural disasters, especially hurricanes. In **Ecuador**, USAID is working with its development partners to build earthquake-resistant schools, train government workers in disaster management, disseminate information in disaster-prone areas, and protect the environment.

In **Haiti** the Agency is working with PVOs, the United Nations, and local communities to provide disaster management training and to stockpile food staples. The goal is to increase the government's capacity to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. The government established a commission on disaster preparedness and preparation that has set up a database with an inventory of resources available in the event of a disaster. Haiti is now part of the Caribbean Disaster Mitigation Project.

In **Jamaica**, USAID is engaged in disaster prevention and mitigation for floods, hurricanes, and tropical storms through the Regional Housing and Development Office of the Caribbean and the Caribbean Disaster Mitigation project. For example, the Agency is providing shelter to low-income families through a housing-guarantee program.

Because of drought in southern Africa in 1994 and 1995, USAID country programs in the region developed contingency plans to deal with a possible recurrence in the 1995–96 growing season. The Agency conducted a needs assessment and prepared an emergency assistance plan for the region. Staff from the Agency-supported Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) collected and analyzed information that helped USAID Missions identify aid requirements and surplus availability outside the region. That reduced the amount of food aid required from sources outside sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, a follow-up assessment of relief efforts in **Zambia** found that food security had improved, providing greater household food access.

USAID is enhancing disaster preparedness and promoting effective delivery of humanitarian assistance to **Rwanda** and **Burundi** and refugee camps in neighboring countries. The Agency addressed the immediate crisis by procuring commodities and services in a timely manner. The Agency also provided oversight for Famine Early Warning System activities in the Greater Horn of Africa and support for developing bilateral food security strategies in **Eritrea**, **Ethiopia**, and **Tanzania**. With USAID assistance, **Niger**'s early-warning unit has begun to produce annual vulnerability assessments to mitigate local famines.

Box 5.1. Latin American Partners Take On Prevention Training

In 1996, for the first time partner countries in Latin America and the Caribbean will have spent more money for disaster training than USAID. The government of **Chile**, for example, budgeted \$225,000 for disaster management training in 1996. In **Bolivia**, the Development Corporation of Santa Cruz committed \$100,000 for regional disaster management training.

One of the main factors contributing to the effectiveness of FEWS over the past year has been the system's development of products made available over the Internet. These have improved information links between the U.S. early-warning system and the Food and Agriculture Organization's Global Information Early Warning System. As a result, decision-makers responsible for helping prevent or mitigate famine are receiving more timely and useful information about the risk of famine throughout Africa.

Disaster management training in Latin America also has had positive results (see box 5.1). Since December 1994, when the Popocatepetl volcano erupted near **Mexico** City threatening 45 million people, the Agency and the U.S. Geological Survey have worked with Mexican civil defense scientists to improve equipment that interprets volcanic activity. As a result of the Agency's assistance, Mexican civil defense officials have developed extensive emergency plans

to manage various scales of eruptions and mitigate potential large-scale disaster.

The Greater Horn of Africa Initiative (GHAI), a presidential initiative conceived in 1994, began as an idea to develop regional approaches to the underlying causes of food security and conflict in a newly defined region. It includes 10 countries: **Burundi**, **Djibouti**, **Eritrea**, **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, **Rwanda**, **Somalia**, **Sudan**, **Tanzania**, and **Uganda**. This year the leaders of those nations revitalized their regional organization, the Intergovernmental Authority for Development, to coordinate activities among member countries and with donors.

Under GHAI, USAID resources for development assistance, refugee programs, food aid, and other relief involve active collaboration with the State Department, other U.S. government agencies, and African leaders. GHAI provides a framework to report on results across the bilateral and regional programs in all 10 countries.

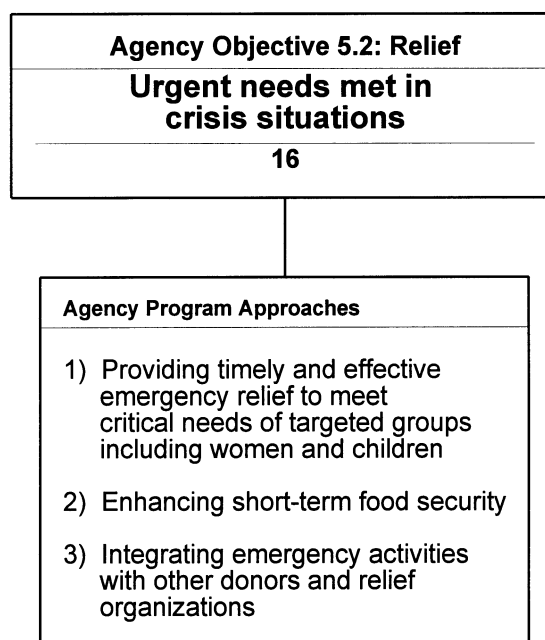
Early in 1996, USAID Mission directors and State Department chiefs of mission committed themselves to the GHAI goals of food security and conflict prevention. They also committed themselves to the principles of African ownership, donor coordination, intensification of regional approaches, and linking relief and development. These goals and principles are included in a strategic plan.

GHAI set up task forces and interagency teams with international and local partners, donors, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). It trains personnel in conflict prevention and its application to the initiative. GHAI prepared and widely distributed a manual that summarizes tools that can be used in conflict prevention. GHAI created a database of food security projects to improve coordination with other donors, NGOs, and other partners.

Relief: Meeting Urgent Needs In Crisis Situations

USAID emergency relief activities help meet the critical needs of targeted groups (particularly women and children), enhancing short-term food security and coordinating emergency activities with other countries and relief organizations (see figure 5.5). Relief continues to be the primary

Figure 5.5. Agency Program Approaches Contributing to Agency Objective 5.2



response in humanitarian assistance since it addresses the most immediate need.

In 1996, 21 million people received emergency food aid. Food resources for emergency relief were channeled through the World Food Program, of which the United States is the largest contributor, or through PL 480 and International Disaster Assistance programs.

PL 480 food aid (see table 5.1) provided rations for 4.2 million refugees, 7.5 million displaced persons, and 9.2 million additional emergency recipients. In 1996 at least two million fewer people required food aid than in 1995. This

resulted from lower demand in Africa, with resettlement programs under way in **Angola, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone**. It may also be the result of improved targeting of food to vulnerable groups. USAID contributed technical assistance and resources to achieve both outcomes (see box 5.2).

Timely and Effective Response to Meet Critical Needs

As mentioned, of the 65 disasters to which USAID responded in 1996, 17 were man-made and 48 were natural. In **Somalia** civil strife continues to make more than a million people unable to return to normal agricultural activity;

Table 5.1. PL 480 Emergency Food Aid Recipients

(In million of persons)

Region	Refugees	Emergency	Disabled Persons	Total
Africa	2.8	4.7	5.0	12.5
Asia and the Near East	1.4	3.6	.3	5.3
Europe and the new independent states	—	.6	1.9	2.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	—	.3	.3	.6
	4.2	9.2	7.5	20.9

Source: Office of Food For Peace, 1996.

they still depend on emergency food aid. This year USAID provided food, water, sanitation assistance, and emergency and preventive health care.

The CARE/World Food Program food monetization program, which began in 1993 with USAID support, continues to create employment through labor-intensive cash-for-work programs. These have created 50,000 short-term and 4,000 permanent jobs repairing irrigation canals.

The program also supports health and sanitation endeavors and promotes livestock and agricultural activities. As a result, Somalis have more access to stable food markets. CARE, with USAID support, maintains basic services and agriculture systems that support

the community. Other programs deliver emergency health care to insecure areas and short-term rehabilitative assistance where productive capacity can be restored. USAID implements these programs in partnership with NGOs and PVOs.

In 1996 the United States suspended its diplomatic presence in **Sudan** because of intense political turmoil. That places more than four million people in need of relief. USAID provided Sudan with funding for emergency water, sanitation, health care, and agricultural rehabilitation. The strategy meets food, shelter, and health needs countrywide while supporting rehabilitation to

increase the country's ability to meet its own needs and reduce the costs of U.S. assistance.

In **Burundi**, as violence and other signs of insecurity continue to escalate, USAID partners are providing emergency medical assistance. The Agency provides funds to the UN International Children's Fund (UNICEF) to stockpile emergency nonfood items, including medical supplies, and to CARE to repair water systems. Emergency food needs are addressed through a grant to the World Food Program for Rwandan refugees in Burundi. USAID provides funds for air transport. This ensures secure access for all NGOs and UN agencies to areas outside the capital, Bujumbura, since it is unsafe to travel overland. Over the last two years, USAID

Box 5.2. Women: Hunger and Basic Rights

Most humanitarian assistance goes to women and children. Women, especially those who are pregnant or nursing, and children under 5 are the primary victims of food shortages in complex emergencies. Programs for complex emergencies attempt to provide a full range of reproductive health services for women, including maternal health, family planning, breast-feeding promotion, and prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS.

Because of cultural factors, women tend to suffer disproportionately from hunger and malnutrition, a problem made worse in refugee situations. Emergency feeding programs should target reproductive-age women to ensure adequate consumption of calories and protein and essential micronutrients such as vitamin A, iron, and iodine. Discrimination against women often worsens in wartime. International emergency aid incorporates measures to protect women's rights to property and other assets and to bolster their participation in politics.

In the Rwanda crisis, the plight of survivors, especially women, has been seriously neglected. As much as 70 percent of humanitarian assistance went to refugees in asylum countries, instead of to the needy in Rwanda. Widows and orphaned daughters risk losing property to male relatives of their deceased husband or father. Some of the women, raped by the men who killed their families, are pregnant; others are infected with HIV. Yet not a single national-level program addresses the special needs of these women. USAID financed the Women in Transition initiative, which provides women with vocational training, microenterprise credit, and small grants for construction.

Perpetrators of violence against women go unpunished in many parts of the world because women are relegated to second-class status. Gender-based discrimination and crimes persist both in times of peace and in war. The international community must ensure that violence against women is treated with the same gravity as other crimes against humanity.

provided emergency assistance to displaced persons in Burundi and in neighboring states such as **Tanzania** and **Zaire**, where large numbers of refugees from **Rwanda** and Burundi still seek asylum.

Food assistance is still a primary need in some countries. In 1996, USAID funded significant amounts of food assistance for Rwandan refugees both within the country and in neighboring states. The Agency also provided funds for primary health care and water systems rehabilitation. In **Liberia**, with

fighting escalating between rebel factions, an estimated 1.5 million citizens, including more than 700,000 internally displaced persons, still need humanitarian assistance. During 1995–96, USAID provided humanitarian assistance to Liberia for emergency food, water and sanitation, and health care. The Agency continued to provide disaster assistance and emergency food aid in 1996. Some of this aid provides transition support for people returning to agricultural production. Food assistance not only supplies needed nutrition but

also helps reintegrate people into economic life through food-for-work and monetization programs.

In Asia, USAID helped combat the effects of floods and tropical storms. In **Bangladesh**, the Agency is developing systems to evacuate people to safe shelters before natural disasters strike. It is also working to increase the level of other disaster preparedness measures. These measures include providing faster and better delivery of relief supplies to disaster victims, minimizing postdisaster nutritional wasting

of infants and children and reducing postdisaster distress sales of land, cattle, and other assets.

In the **Philippines**, typhoon Angela killed 600 people and destroyed almost 100,000 homes in November 1995—the worst storm in the Philippines since 1987. Total damages were estimated at \$83 million. More than a million people were affected. USAID provided emergency relief to 637,000 evacuees and homeless, transporting them to 1,085 evacuation centers. Victims received clothing, transportation, utensils, potable water, and plastic sheeting.

In the Near East, conditions remain precarious for populations in northern **Iraq**. In 1996, USAID resettled, to their villages of origin, families of Kurds who had been displaced by the Iraqi army following the Gulf War. The Agency also provided heating fuel for social service centers.

In Eastern Europe (see box 5.3) and the new independent states, the three Caucasus republics, **Armenia**, **Azerbaijan**, and **Georgia**, have suffered from conflict, civil strife, and economic dislocation since the breakup of the Soviet Union. All three republics have had to deal with large populations of refugees and displaced persons. By 1996 there were still 800,000 refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan,

377,000 in Armenia, and 280,000 in Georgia. USAID delivered supplementary food and fuel to the most vulnerable groups in each country. Stabilization is progressing, and economic recovery is beginning in Armenia and Georgia.

Enhancing Short-Term Food Security

Establishing short-term food security, especially emergency relief, is inherent in humanitarian assistance. Appropriate donors can provide short-term food security to the most needy in emergency and postemergency societies.

Relief in complex emergencies addresses short-term food security needs and is often part of a country's transition out of crisis. USAID's collaborative relief efforts in **Angola** illustrate this. Since Angola's peace accord was signed in fall of 1994, security has gradually improved, allowing relief organizations to help the neediest. Because of the vast numbers of malnourished Angolans and conflicting information on where the greatest needs existed, NGOs and UN agencies needed a rapid nutritional assessment to target food aid. Action Internationale Contre La Faim/USA, a PVO, received Agency funding to conduct regular food security surveys. These surveys identified groups and areas with the greatest need and are helping humanitarian organizations plan and target activities. As a result,

in less than six months during 1996, the malnutrition rate dropped from 40 percent to below 5 percent in one of the areas surveyed.

Transition: Establishing Security and Getting Basic Institutions Functioning

Transition activities (see figure 5.6) include

- Enhancing local security, especially through demobilization and demining
- Strengthening local governance and institutions that promote reconciliation and reduce tensions, improving integration of humanitarian and development assistance
- Rehabilitating social and physical infrastructure (roads, bridges, schools, clinics, irrigation systems)

In Africa, the transition program in **Mozambique** has successfully provided food aid for two million returnees from six neighboring countries of asylum. The international donor and World Bank cash support has allowed for a peaceful resettlement, as well as increased farming and infrastructure improvements. With these advances, 1997 will see the elimination of emergency food aid to Mozambique, with the exception of that needed in response to drought (see box 5.4).

Box 5.3. U.S. Foreign Assistance Helps a Nation Rebuild

Six months after the November 1995 signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, international reconstruction efforts continued in the former Yugoslavia. The U.S. foreign assistance program in **Bosnia–Herzegovina**, carried out primarily by USAID, includes humanitarian aid and reconstruction. Humanitarian assistance programs are helping 2.4 million people resume normal lives. The balance of U.S. aid goes to demining, police training, human rights monitoring, and activities supporting the Bosnian elections and the War Crimes Tribunal. In addition, the U.S. government delivered more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance to the former Yugoslavia since 1991. The program is endeavoring to create a stable, democratic postwar Bosnia–Herzegovina with strong institutions and a free-market economy.

To build the momentum for peace in the region, USAID has begun efforts to promote economic revitalization through five programs:

1. *Emergency shelter repair.* The immediate emphasis is on accelerating the return of displaced Bosnian families and Bosnian refugees to their homes through civilian economic recovery programs. Through NGOs, USAID is providing basic emergency repairs of 2,500 single-family houses, home to 12,500 people in 44 villages. The program has allowed families to resume agricultural and other productive activities, thereby contributing to economic revitalization.

2. *Municipal infrastructure and services.* This finances the repair and reconstruction of basic economic infrastructure damaged during the war.

Activities include electricity, communication, sanitation, water services, transportation systems, and community facilities such as health clinics and schools. About 30 projects are under way; construction will be completed on all but the largest projects by the end of 1996. These activities are generating civilian jobs for former soldiers. Some 40,000 jobs will be created during the life of the program.

3. *Bosnian reconstruction finance facility.* The program's primary objective is to increase employment by providing quick disbursing loans to restart and expand viable enterprises. As of September 1996, 16 loans had been approved that will create 1,900 jobs. They include financing for producers of roofing materials, a fruit-and-vegetable processing plant, a clothing firm, and a furniture plant.

4. *Economic transformation.* A priority task facing Bosnia–Herzegovina is the transition to a market economy. USAID is helping accelerate development of an efficient private sector in the postwar rebuilding process. The Agency is providing technical assistance in five areas: customs, privatization, financial sector reform, enterprise restructuring, and tax and budgetary reform.

5. *Democratic reforms.* The United States is providing technical assistance to help build strong, enduring democratic institutions. USAID supports the growth of open media, free elections, responsive government, and a fair judiciary.

In **Angola** food aid also played an important role in moving the country out of the emergency stage. Now, the central political development needs are to build peace, establish some freedom of

movement, and expand local self-governance. USAID made a substantial investment in keeping war-affected citizens in Angola alive with food and emergency medical assistance during the past seven years. The

number of beneficiaries reached a high of more than 800,000 a month in 1994. By 1996 the monthly average had dropped to 400,000.

To further the transition to democracy in **Lebanon**, USAID is resettling families, implementing rural community rehabilitation and reconstruction, and strengthening community organizations. In **Cambodia** the Agency is reconstructing infrastructure destroyed during war and providing relief and rehabilitation to orphans, displaced persons, and victims of land mine explosions. USAID also provides security and rehabilitation to Burmese refugees from **Burma** along the Thai–Burmese border.

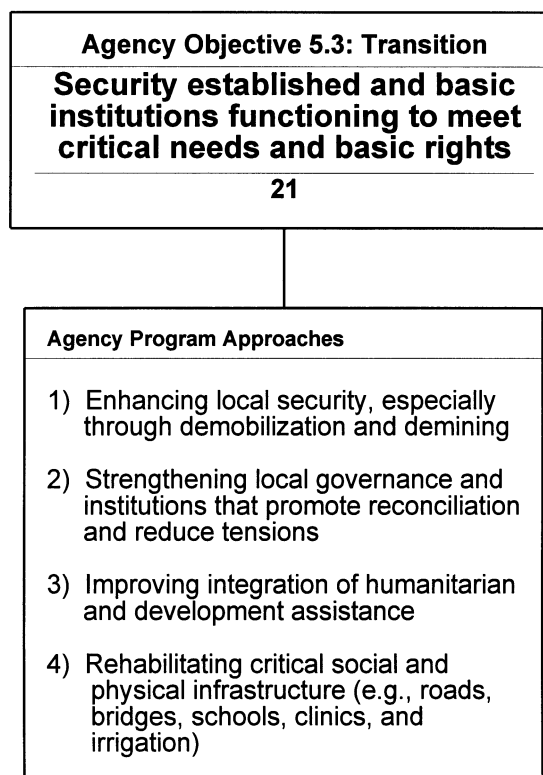
In Eastern Europe and the new independent states, USAID is easing the transition to democracy by alleviating animosities between organizations and providing relief to vulnerable groups. Among the interventions:

■ In **Azerbaijan** USAID is targeting refugees and other vulnerable groups for food aid, shelter, and health care and is developing income-generating agricultural activities.

■ In **Belarus** USAID provides relief and transition assistance to long-term victims of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident.

■ In **Bulgaria** the Agency is helping the government develop a social security system.

Figure 5.6. Agency Program Approaches Contributing to Agency Objective 5.3



■ In **Croatia** the Agency seeks to resettle, train, and provide employment to displaced persons; reduce violence in families; arrest and convict human rights violators; and restore interethnic communities.

■ In **Georgia** USAID is developing a database to monitor the number of vulnerable people to better target assistance to the needy and help in the design of emergency response plans. It meets relief needs (for nutrition, shelter, and

clothing) of vulnerable groups, monetizes food aid, and links relief to development activities.

■ In **Ukraine** the Agency is providing relief and rehabilitation to orphans and the elderly, supporting development of local NGOs, implementing disease control, and training Ukrainians in emergency medical procedures.

In Europe and the new independent states, an example of a successful transition program that addresses the basic ability of families to become

Box 5.4. Crossing the Bridge to Peace

On his way home from work, Leonardo Mulvani, a former soldier, crosses the recently reconstructed Dona Ana Bridge, once the longest rail bridge in Africa. Until recently, this damaged bridge symbolized the destruction and damage caused by civil war. In December 1995, as a result of USAID rehabilitation financing, the Dona Ana's fallen spans were raised from the riverbed, and the bridge was converted for vehicular use. Today that same bridge is a link across the Zambezi River, benefiting all Mozambicans. It offers a symbol of hope for a reunified **Mozambique** at peace.

Mulvani himself has gone through a remarkable transformation much like that of the Dona Ana. USAID provided job and training opportunities and small grants for 15,000 ex-combatants to reintegrate themselves into civilian life. This former soldier updated his welding skills, got a new welding kit, and took courses in microenterprise

start-up and management. With a \$1,500 reintegration grant and his own \$1,000 in-kind investment, he started a small welding enterprise and trained six other ex-soldiers. He employs them in automobile repair, rehabilitating trucks and minibuses that transport people across the Dona Ana.

Today, Mulvani's profits have replaced his monthly reintegration subsidy. He has financed construction of a small commodities shop, run by his wife. He now provides short-term loans to his employees, enabling them to buy their own welding kits. Mulvani's services are in such demand that he plans to train and hire more demobilized soldiers. He has applied for credit to finance this expansion. In one short year, Mulvani has built a new business, created employment, and provided services in high demand, benefiting his family, his community, and his country.

financially self-sufficient is **Armenia**. But unless economic conditions improve to generate significant employment and household income, impoverished conditions will continue (see box 5.5).

USAID's efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean are helping countries make the transition from war to peace and democracy. Most of these activities include rehabilitation, infrastructure reconstruction, provision of social services, resumption of economic activity, development of civil society, and vocational and financial assistance to ex-combatants and vulnerable groups.

■ In **Guatemala** the Agency is helping bolster the peace accords, resettling uprooted populations, and establishing a more responsive judicial system to reduce human rights violations.

■ In **Haiti** USAID is helping train and deploy a new police force to provide security.

■ In **Nicaragua** USAID is helping civil rights associations protect human rights by monitoring violence against members of the demobilized Sandinista army. Murders dropped from 31 in 1990–91 to 13 in 1995.

USAID recognizes the need to rehabilitate war victims and help them become citizens who can once again contribute to society. Under the War Victims Fund, USAID provided assistance to establish sustainable prosthetics and related medical, surgical, and rehabilitative services for civilian victims of war. Activities are ongoing under this fund in **Angola, Armenia, Cambodia, Laos, and Mozambique** to facilitate reintegration of the wounded into normal life. Since the fund was established, USAID has helped more than 30,000 civilian victims of war, ensuring

that victims have long-term access to prosthetic and orthopedic services.

In Laos although 20 years have passed since the end of armed conflict, unexploded ordnance detonates weekly in the province where the War Victims Fund center is located. Most victims are children. Typically, these explosions kill or maim more than one person. USAID is funding programs that teach women and children how to identify and avoid land mines. This year funding was provided for prosthetics to help improve the lives of amputees in Cambodia.

The Vietnam Veterans of America is providing prosthetics and orthotics to 3,000 Cambodian land-mine and polio victims, working with local institutions to enhance the Cambodian National Rehabilitation Center. In partnership with the American Red Cross, USAID provides additional assistance in prosthetics in Cambodia, where war and ordnance left behind have disabled 135,000 citizens. Land mines continue to claim 150 civilian lives a month.

Over the past decade, more than a million children worldwide have lost one or both parents as a result of war. To reach children displaced or orphaned by war, in 1989 USAID launched the Fund for Displaced Children and Orphans. The Agency has collaborated with the International Committee for the Red Cross,

Box 5.5. Armenia: Moving Toward Self-Sufficiency

Owing in part to the 1988 earthquake and the breakup of the Soviet Union, a large proportion of Armenians live below the poverty level. The average wage of \$4–5 a month does not meet the cost of sustaining an average family, estimated at \$141 a month.

USAID assistance created a computer database of 600,000 registered households and ranked them by level of poverty. All major international donors, including the United Nations, use the database to compile vulnerable population lists. It is managed by government social workers and verifies household vulnerability. Humanitarian interventions are then designed targeting those most in need.

The program, for instance, targeted kerosene distribution during the winter of 1995–96. The Winter Warmth Program then supplied kerosene to more than 175,000 families, 35,000 shelters, and 1,100 schools. As a result, schools remained open in winter and school attendance increased by 54 percent. As a disaster-prevention measure, USAID provided food aid to 71,000 needy Armenian families before winter and supplied basic commodities to 50,000 vulnerable households. USAID, through PVO partnership, funded two projects providing pharmaceutical coverage to 368,000 women in one area, and nationwide to children under 15. It created employment opportunities for hundreds of unemployed workers in agriculture and light industries.

UNICEF, and NGOs to implement programs that reunite children with family members.

The programs first identify and document unaccompanied children, then trace families or relatives. Children are reunited with their natural or appropriate substitute families as quickly as possible. These programs also address the psychological and social after-effects of stress and trauma caused by war. The fund benefits children affected by war, street children, and orphans of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in more than 30 countries. In 1996

the fund helped 10,000 children in **Angola, Bosnia, Croatia, and Rwanda.**

The Role of Food Aid In the Transition To Development

USAID employs food aid resources to alleviate long-standing complex emergencies of **Angola, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and the former Yugoslavia.** An increasing amount of food aid is being directed toward transition needs. Programs are implemented through USAID PVO partners and through the World

Food Program. Millions of refugees and displaced persons benefit from these programs yearly. In addition to saving lives, food programs build food security for vulnerable groups during and after emergencies.

The food-for-work project in **Bangladesh** is one of the largest labor-intensive public works projects in the world. It generates more than 70 million workdays of rural employment a year. Implemented through the World Food Program, the project has made considerable progress in moving programs into the mandated developmental bodies such as the Ministry of Local Government.

Infrastructure improvement boosted developmental in rural areas. USAID also supports the Food for Education Program, which increased the percentage of total public food distribution to target groups from 39 percent in 1992 to 68 percent in 1995. These activities have improved children's nutritional status, decreasing the number of underweight children and the amount of wasting and stunting.

In **Eritrea** a USAID-funded project lowered food aid dependency 75 percent in 1995. Farmers' income rose 25 percent. Crop production went up 40 percent and yields increased. There was also more water for human and livestock consumption, and improved soil and water conservation through tree-planting.

Programs implemented by PVOs in **Ethiopia** enhanced food security, improved primary infrastructure services, rehabilitated agricultural production, and helped conserve soil and water. These activities led to increased production and crop yields, and they improved food access for families through food rations and increased incomes. Projects maintained the nutritional level of target groups while meeting short-term food needs, thus preventing malnutrition in the event of future food shortage.

In **Haiti** the incidence of malnutrition of children under 5 fell from 28.4 percent in 1994 to 20.8 percent in 1995. Surprisingly, programs in urban slum areas, where more children are expected to be malnourished, showed only 15 percent of children under 5 suffered from malnutrition. Much of this improvement can be attributed to PL 480 food aid, which constitutes 80 percent of the food aid distributed to vulnerable groups in Haiti. In addition, the number of people receiving food aid declined from a high of 1.3 million at the end of 1994 to 875,000 one year later. Improved nutrition is one indicator that Haiti is exiting the emergency phase. With the shift from emergency aid, food distribution integrated with health programs (which is more successful in combating malnutrition) doubled, from 6 percent in 1995 to 12 percent in 1996.

Improved targeting of food to vulnerable groups can produce significant results. For example, in **Rwanda**, Title II emergency programs provided daily rations of 2,000 calories to refugees and displaced families affected by the civil war, protecting them from starvation and severe malnutrition. Programs reestablished farming activities for returning families and provided salary supplements enabling 24,000 civil servants and teachers to return to work. In **Sierra Leone**, between August 1995 and June 1996, food targeted to children and needy adults in two areas reduced overall malnutrition rates from more than 25 percent to less than 8 percent.

Demobilizing and Reintegrating Ex-Combatants

Since the early 1990s, USAID has supported demobilization of soldiers and reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian society as a pivotal aspect of transition from complex emergencies to development. Together with its international partners, USAID has supported programs in **El Salvador, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Uganda**. Successful demobilization and reintegration programs reestablish civilians' personal security.

Sierra Leone is experiencing a critical transition from military rule to elected civilian government. Several rounds of peace talks sponsored in part by USAID led to the end of a five-year civil war. USAID's objectives are to consolidate the peace process and empower civilians to prevent the recurrence of violence. The Agency is also seeking to complete the transition from emergency relief to resettlement and reintegration and to address the causes of the conflict.

In **El Salvador**, as part of the Peace and National Recovery project, the Agency designed and implemented activities to demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants into civilian society. The project was based on an intensive Agency study of other postcomplex-emergency assistance programs in **Colombia, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe** and an extensive assessment of the infrastructure in El Salvador's former conflict areas.

January 1992 marked the end of the 12-year civil war in El Salvador. The war claimed 75,000 lives and crippled basic infrastructure and services. The U.S. government mediated El Salvador's transition from war to peace and contributed \$300 million of the total donor pledge of \$860 million for a five-year program. Launched in May 1992, the Peace and National Recovery project addresses the root causes of political instability—inequality, poverty, and landlessness. It builds local

democratic institutions to encourage full participation in national recovery. The project has achieved USAID's strategic objective of helping El Salvador make the transition from war to peace.

The program links relief and transition with economic growth and food security:

■ Some 34,000 Salvadoran ex-combatants and squatters received land, enabling them to grow food.

■ Almost 97,000 Salvadorans (71 percent men and 29 percent women) received vocational and technical training, or high school— or university-level education. The project trained more than 23,300 people in 1995, far surpassing the target of 8,300.

■ The project provided agricultural or microenterprise credit to more than 83,000 Salvadoran beneficiaries (68 percent men and 32 percent women).

The project prompted creation of new and expanded businesses. Overall household incomes of beneficiary families increased by an average of 35 percent. An estimated 65 percent of male and 67 percent of female beneficiaries earned higher incomes. The project also aligned relief and transition with infrastructure, democracy, and governance:

■ One hundred thirty-six NGOs (125 Salvadoran and 11 international) participated in the project, channeling \$100 million to beneficiaries.

■ The project helped organize 365 open municipal town meetings in the 15 project municipalities. Turnout in 1995 increased 15 percent because of the success of the meetings in 1994. In 1995, 89 percent of the 871 communities participated.

■ The Peace and National Recovery project provided benefits to more than 26,000 ex-combatants.

■ The project improved 23 percent of damaged roads in the former conflict zones and restored access to basic services. From 1992 to 1996, the project rehabilitated more than 2,000 kilometers of roads.

In **Liberia** the civil war ongoing since December 1989 has put 1.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. In response, the U.S. government provided emergency aid to Liberia from 1990 through 1996. In 1995–96, USAID provided almost one fourth of its total funding for emergency aid, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The Agency supports the following activities:

Democratic Transition

Peace talks.

USAID supported peace negotiations in collaboration with its partners. Representatives from the Economic Community of West African States, the UN, and various warring factions worked

together to devise a new formula for the Liberian peace process.

Civic awareness.

The Agency promoted conflict resolution and reconciliation and supported preparations for national elections. It encouraged grass-roots organizations to become involved in civic advocacy and sponsored endeavors to rebuild civil society, including voter education, media skills training, and human rights awareness and monitoring.

Civil society.

USAID gave more than 20 local NGOs grants for projects to build civil society. For example, the NGO Women in Action for Goodwill conducts radio programs in 16 Liberian languages imploring combatants to disarm and return home to rebuild their communities.

Transition From Relief To Recovery

■ *Transition services.* Liberia is working toward the transition from relief by enhancing security, establishing political stability, improving social and economic infrastructure, and resuming social services. USAID is phasing out general distribution of food to concentrate on those most in need. The Agency supports psychological trauma counseling and vocational schools offering training in skilled trades, primary health care, and laboratory technician work. These activities encour-

age ex-combatants and others to reintegrate and become productive members of civilian society.

■ *Seeds and tools.* More than 68,000 Liberian farmers received seeds and tools, enabling them to meet their own food consumption needs, which reduced the need for food aid. Combined with food-for-work activities, this program has increased the amount of land under cultivation, facilitating the return to productive lives. USAID improved food security so general mass feeding is no longer essential.

Reconstruction. USAID financed 42 projects in Liberia during 1996 to rebuild communities, schools, clinics, shelters for displaced persons, wells, roads, and markets.

Strengthening Local Governance and Institutions That Promote Reconciliation

In **Haiti**, USAID continued to work to transform the political environment from one of intimidation to an atmosphere that supports broad-based, sustainable development. USAID enlisted the help of the Geneva-based International Organization for Migration to develop a Communal Governance Program.

Characterized by rapid action and high visibility, the program has implemented microprojects in all regions of Haiti. More than 2,000 community groups representing 50,000 Haitians are involved. Microprojects range from rebuilding community

schools, roads, markets, canals, and bridges to organizing and running civic education, literacy, public health, reforestation, and sanitation activities. USAID funding for these activities has leveraged significant resources from local communities (primarily through in-kind donations), the United States, and other foreign militaries operating in Haiti, and from UN agencies.

The hallmark of the program is the participatory process it uses to empower communities. Now in its second phase, the project emphasizes bringing locally elected representatives together with community groups to address local needs. It is contributing to democratization by promoting dialog between elected officials and their constituents. It is also helping local groups begin problem-solving after years of inaction, caused by repression and lack of resources.

The crisis in **Rwanda** in April 1994 tested the capacity of the international humanitarian community to respond. An estimated 500,000 to 800,000 people were massacred in less than 10 weeks of genocide and civil war. Unprecedented numbers of people were uprooted from their homes; tens of thousands of refugees suffered the immeasurable physical and psychological traumas of maiming, rape, and other acts of violence.

A multidonor team including USAID evaluated the performance of human rights assistance. Among the recommendations:

1. Establish a small high-caliber unit to analyze information on alleged crimes, ranging from conspiracy to genocide.
2. Provide sufficient funds, clear mandates, and qualified professional staff to coordinate activities.
3. Conduct an independent evaluation of the UN human rights field operation for Rwanda, with specific recommendations for optimal response to human rights violations.

The international donor community undertook initiatives to investigate alleged human rights violations during the war, monitor the human rights situation, reestablish confidence, and provide technical assistance in the administration of justice. The international community established the International Tribunal for Rwanda, reconstructed the justice system, and helped the UN human rights field operation. It collaborated to provide needed assistance for the judicial system. USAID provided supplies and equipment.

It will take time for this effort to produce tangible results. The real challenge is for Rwanda to put into place a new political culture. The international community can play a limited,

though significant, role in helping the government meet this challenge.

Conclusion

USAID faces growing humanitarian assistance challenges. Recent evaluations capture some of the deeper dimensions of what the Agency has been learning about its humanitarian assistance work over the past year.

Prevention initiatives. As the Agency continues to increase its investments in prevention activities, a more rigorous review of crisis-prone countries is needed to curtail the need for disaster response over time. The relationship of humanitarian assistance to long-term development strategies is a critical part of this analysis. The rise in the occurrence of complex emergencies calls for improved prediction and crisis management.


Agricultural research and improved natural resource management can help prevent famine. For example, new varieties of fast-growing groundnuts, rice, cow pea, maize, millet, and sorghum have made it possible for farmers in the drought-prone Sahel to adapt to shorter and more variable planting seasons. Natural resource management practices in food-insecure regions can also improve production. For example, trees planted along field boundaries

acted as a wind barrier and contributed to a 20 percent increase in food crop yields in Niger in 1996.

Developing an effective early-warning system for impending crises is also important. In the Sahel, USAID created a timely communication system that cut information transmission time from seven days to minutes.

Meeting emergency relief needs. Most humanitarian assistance, particularly relief, is targeted to the most vulnerable groups—women and children. Too often men control food distribution, diverting commodities to arms purchases, to support for combatant forces, or as a tool for sexual exploitation. Relief organizations now recognize the critical role of women in managing food distribution to achieve adequate nutrition levels and food security in emergencies. Generating separate data on vulnerable groups by sex, age, and physical status is important for the design of programs that meet the needs of these primary disaster victims (especially in complex emergencies) when there are high risks for both malnutrition and exploitation.

Development of databases and registration programs in several countries has helped donors target humanitarian assistance to those most in need. Household data on income, nutrition, sex, and health status establish vulnerability criteria.



Relief organizations then use the information to coordinate assistance.

Transition to development.

Food assistance must be flexible to respond to changing needs in a complex emergency, taking advantage of brief opportunities to build popular participation and political will. An example of a successful relief-to-development program is the distribution of agricultural seed packs to help farmers in southern Africa begin planting once drought has ended.

Food security is enhanced when linked with longer term health interventions, such as programs to promote child survival. Because child survival interventions alone do not lower malnutrition, USAID pursues a food security strategy that incorporates feeding of mothers and children with other child survival initiatives. The program in Kenya illustrates. In

that country, a model links research, development, and technology transfer with agricultural policy reform, which frees local markets from policy restrictions so that food can move from surplus to deficit areas, increasing food security.

